

it over her head, shaking her breasts, and nobody notices.  
Phil sticks his thumbs in his suspenders.  
Judy rolls snake eyes and says, "shit."  
The Arab guys laugh, one of them gooses her.  
The black guy wails, his big mamma didn't come home last night and she's got his credit card and he's got the worried blues.

#### CLIFFORD AND BEVERLY DRIVE HOME FROM LAS VEGAS

"Look at all the fucking cactus," Cliff said as he rolled down his window to throw an empty beer can out.

"Joshua trees, dear, joshua trees," said Beverly, working the knitting needles on a sweater for their ninth grandchild, little Harvey, "and I wish you wouldn't use profanity."

"Joshua trees, joshua trees," Cliff said in a mocking falsetto, "what the fuck do you know?" Beverly smiled a tolerant smile, the same smile she smiled at her misbehaving grandchildren. She deftly disconnected one of the knitting needles from little Harvey's sweater and drove it a full six inches into Clifford's ear. The car swerved off the road, knocking over a joshua tree before Beverly could get her foot to the brake and stop it.

She got out of her side of the car and walked over to the driver's side, opened the door and pulled Cliff's lifeless, blubbery body out and into the sand. She got behind the wheel, feeling under the seat for the briefcase with the \$120,000 that she had won at the crap table while Clifford was passed out drunk.

She started the engine and pulled out onto the highway, lighting a cigarette, undoing her pinned-up hair, letting it fall around her shoulders. She put her foot to the floor, took a drag off the cigarette and said, to no one in particular, "Old Cliff shouldn't have fucked with Beverly today."

#### IN LINE AT THE POST OFFICE

Oh my God, look at the bazooms on her, he thought. He'd gotten out of his car and saw her walking across the parking lot in a tight, revealing t-shirt, big bombers



bouncing around, nipples as big as tea saucers. He rushed so he could get to the door first and hold it open for her.

She smiled.

"Hi," he said.

She walked by him without saying anything.

He followed her in, letting the door go in the face of a mean, desiccated looking old woman that he hadn't seen coming.

"Well, that's a fine, polite young man, it is," the old lady yelled, "What ever happened to good manners, huh?"

Shaddup, he thought.

He'd gotten in line behind "Bazooms" and was trying to figure out how to start a conversation. Bazooms and the other people in line were looking back at the commotion.

The old lady grabbed his arm and spun him around.

Strong old bitch, he thought.

"What's the matter, Hot Shot? You can't hold the door open for an old lady, but Miss Boobies here gets the star treatment, huh? How about if I shake it around a little bit, huh? Maybe then I won't get the door slammed in my face."

She started doing an exaggerated feminine walk, rolling her hips, sticking her nonexistent breasts out, batting her eyes. The other people in line were getting a kick out of her.

Bazooms looked at him and said, "You should have held the door for her, Champ."

"Tell me about it."

The old lady sashayed back up to him. "So, now you strike up a conversation. Going to pick up the hussy, huh? Well let me tell you ...."

He slapped her, hoping she'd stop cold and say, "Thanks, I needed that." But she didn't

She lunged at him and grabbed his mustache.

"HEY, HEY. LET GO." She was pulling hard. It was painful.



She pulled him over to the door he'd failed to open for her, dragged him half way out, pulled him around in front of her, let go and gave him a good kick in the ass, sending him sprawling in front of the newspaper machines. Then she stood there with her hands on her hips, daring him to try and come back in. He wouldn't dare.

He just sat there and rubbed his upper lip.

Bazooms came up behind her, touched her shoulder and said, "Grandma, why do you always embarrass me whenever I take you anywhere?"

#### CHUCK AND NADINE'S HOUSE

He had a bottle hidden underneath some old blankets in the garage. We were supposed to be out looking at the cabinets he was finishing, but it was just an excuse. He took out the bottle and took a long pull off of it, then put his finger to his lips.

"Shh. I don't want Nadine to know about this," he said.

"Chuck, I can smell you from here, you're not going to fool her."

"Naw, she's got sinus trouble, she can't smell anything."

"Well, pass that bottle over here."

It was cheap Scotch. I had it tilted back, sucking some up, bubbles bouncing off the upended bottle bottom when Nadine walked in with an armload of laundry. She was a striking woman in a paisley bathrobe and pink fluffy bedroom slippers, large pendulous breasts and an ass a yard wide.

"Scoundrel, drunkard," she screamed at me. She dropped the laundry except for one of her large cupped bras. I tried to run but she wrapped it around my neck from behind, the cups on either side of my head like giant ear muffs, the elastic strap between them cutting off my air supply. She pulled tighter, I struggled to get free, my tongue came out of my mouth, my eyes bulged.

"You devil," she screamed, "bringing evil alcohol into my house to corrupt my husband."

Chuck said, "The son-of-a-bitch tried to pull me off the wagon, Nadine. Give him what he deserves." He swung at